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### RECENT LITERATURE ON THE JUDAISM OF NEW TESTAMENT TIMES.

WITHIN a comparatively few years important additions have been made to the means at hand for a thoroughly scientific interpretation of our New Testament writings. The appearance of two such works as Dalman's *Worte Jesu* and Deissmann's *Bibelstudien* was of no small moment. For Dalman's work has made it forevermore impossible to interpret the Greek New Testament without reference to the Aramaic basis that underlies so much of the New Testament phraseology, while Deissmann has opened our eyes to the fact of the popular Greek idiom, which must be interpreted after its own laws, not after the laws of classical or scholastic Greek. A similar and equally important service is being rendered by the renewed interest in the study of the various currents of Jewish thought of New Testament times which found expression mainly in the apocalyptic literature of that age. The evidence of such a renewed interest is abundant, and it may not be out of place to call attention, in passing, to some of the more significant works that have recently appeared. The careful re-editing of the apocalyptic and similar literature has become a necessity, and has been partially accomplished in Germany in the two volumes on the Old Testament apocrypha and pseudepigrapha in Kautzsch's translation of the Old Testament, and in England by the valuable editions of various apocalyptic works by R. H. Charles. The new translations of the Babylonian Talmud by Wünsche and Goldschmidt, and the constantly growing number of good modern translations or editions of special rabbinical tractates, contain valuable material for the student of the New Testament period. The new edition of Weber's *System der altsynagogalen palästinischen Theologie*, Wünsche's *Neue Beiträge zur Erläuterung der Evangelien aus Talmud und Midrash*, and W. Bacher's *Die Agada der Tanaiten* are of great value. Of works whose object is a more general presentation of the Jewish religious thought of New Testament times the most recent, and in some respects most usable, is Bousset's *Die Religion des Judenthums* (1903). The new third edition of Schürer's invaluable work must, of course, be mentioned. Along more special lines we have Charles's *Eschatology, Jewish and Christian*, Baldensperger's *Die messianisch-apokalyptischen Hoffnungen des Judenthums*, and Volz's *Jüdische Eschatologie von Daniel bis Akiba*.

The field covered by the above-mentioned works is not, indeed, one newly discovered or hitherto entirely neglected. The titles of many works which appear to have dealt with these subjects, and to have done so satisfactorily, will easily suggest themselves to the New Testament student. It must be admitted, however, that until recently the proper point of view had

not been clearly perceived. What was needed was a presentation of the main elements and phases of the Jewish thought by themselves, for their own sake, not with special reference to New Testament ideas, as, for example, the Messiah idea, or taking the New Testament as a standard of comparison. A treatment of the latter kind could only give one-sided, if not positively warped, results. Another needful thing was a more comprehensive view. It has at last been perceived that the rabbinic literature alone, granting that early rabbinic teaching can be ascertained, is no sufficient source for our desired knowledge of the Judaism that was contemporary with the New Testament. It is one, but only one, such source. And, once more, it has been found needful to present the religious and theological movements of Judaism apart from a general history of New Testament times. This, speaking broadly, may be said to be the aim of the new school, represented by such men as Bousset, Baldensperger, Charles, and Volz, to study the Judaism of the two centuries preceding the downfall of the Jewish state church as a complex, many-sided development, intimately related to the political and other movements of the age, reflecting the various and often conflicting hopes of the different elements of the people; in short as a vital process full of intensest feeling and anxious thought. It is evident that by such a study alone is it possible to produce the prolegomena to a scientific New Testament theology.

That it is only recently that this has been perceived is incidentally evidenced by these significant facts. When, ten or twelve years ago, R. H. Charles began to prepare his lectures on Jewish eschatology, he found that, strictly speaking, but little available and satisfactory material was at hand. The whole body of apocalyptic literature needed new treatment, and his special subject had not yet been handled in a scientific manner. As to Charles's work on eschatology, it is only a sketch, by no means exhaustive, and not always satisfactory. Furthermore, Bousset's book on the religion of the Judaism of New Testament times is the only work of importance, since Gfrörer's *Jahrhundert des Heils* of 1838, that gathers its material from the whole field of evidence. And the learned author confesses in his preface that, as his work grew on his hands, he realized, as he had not when he began, how much special investigation was yet necessary in order to reach trustworthy conclusions.

Of the works named above it is the purpose of this article to direct special attention to two, those by Baldensperger<sup>1</sup> and Volz.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Die messianisch-apokalyptischen Hoffnungen des Judenthums.* Von W. BALDENSPERGER. Dritte, völlig umgearbeitete Auflage. Strasburg: Heitz, 1903. xii+240 pages.

<sup>2</sup> *Jüdische Eschatologie von Daniel bis Akiba.* Dargestellt von PAUL VOLZ. Tübingen und Leipzig: Mohr, 1903. xvi+412 pages. M. 7.

Baldensperger's book is the third edition of the first half of his *Selbstbewusstsein Jesu* (1888), but so thoroughly revised as to constitute a new study. The significance of this work lies in the relation it bears to the larger work of which it is the introductory part. It was necessary that one who set before himself the task of writing on the self-consciousness of Jesus should first of all feel the pulse of the age to which Jesus belonged and with which his work was so intimately connected. To do this it was necessary to get behind the gospel narratives, with their true but limited representation of contemporary thought and life. And the one great source of information regarding the religious life of Judaism—not in its more scholastic or in its ceremonial aspects, but in its most vital hopes and convictions and ideals, the very elements with which the gospel has so much to do—is the apocalyptic literature. We have long been well informed as to the main facts of the formal, organized, and regulated Judaism of Jesus' day. The tenets of the Pharisees and Sadducees, the ceremonial customs, the rule of the Law, theological opinions of various kinds held by the Jewish doctors—all these are easily ascertained from standard Lives of Christ or commentaries and similar works. But all such information is insufficient to put us in sympathetic touch with the Jewish world of Jesus' day. We need to know that world from the inside, if possible. We want to know what were the regnant tendencies, the formative influences, the molding forces, the spirit of the times in which Jesus moved, to which he addressed himself, in which he planted his gospel, and under the influence of which the first formulations of Christian doctrine took place. Did Jesus also feel those influences; did he think *with* his age; did he use its terminology? If he did, even in part, to know that age means simply to get a truer point of view whence to see him, to hear him, and to understand him. It is just this service that is rendered by Baldensperger. Limiting himself to one great element of the Jewish thought, the messianic, he attempts to set before us the character and significance of the messianic hopes and doctrines, the part they played in the Judaism of New Testament times. After a brief review of the sources, marked by cautious reserve regarding dates and origin of many parts of this literature, in a masterly treatment he details the various conflicting and often mutually reacting conceptions which contributed to the building up of the sum-total of the messianic ideas. He shows that underneath the legalism, often considered the main characteristic of later Judaism, other opposing, and nearly as powerful, influences or tendencies were at work. Messianism was, in fact, the opposite pole of legalism. It was at once more profound and more vital. It led to deeper thought concern-

ing God and the economy of his world-government, the place of Judaism in the world, the destiny of man, the nature of the unseen world, and the character of the unknown future. These messianic speculations, crude in form as they may appear, grew out of restless thought, deep piety, ardent hope, intense nationalism, and profound conviction. Mere legalism was self-contented and dead. Messianism was alive and dealt with living problems. As such, it had a strong hold on the masses; it was popular. It is particularly noteworthy that these ideas which figure so prominently in the apocalyptic literature are just those with which Jesus' teaching had much in common. When he talked to men of the kingdom, of the world to come, of eternal destiny, he was talking along lines in which his age was more interested than they were in the length of a sabbath day's journey. How, then, was this whole movement—call it messianism or apocalyptic, as you will—related to the general religious and political development of Judaism between the days of Ezra and Nehemiah and the New Testament times? How did it arise, and what were the main notes in the progress of the movement? To answer this question Baldensperger devotes the third division of his book (pp. 91-171). We shall not attempt to summarize his treatment, but would call attention to the main result of the investigation, which is, in brief, that the whole development was exceedingly complicated; and that, while there was progress, the thought ever becoming more definite as well as complicated, it was progress intricate in detail, and full of numerous side developments and reactions. This, again, only signifies how near to the popular heart, and how sensitive to all the varying moods of popular feeling, these messianic-eschatological hopes and theories were. The concluding portion of Baldensperger's work, full of suggestion, but all too brief, is on the nature (*Wesen*) of apocalyptic. It came near to being a philosophy of history; in many respects it was an attitude or a tendency rather than a given set of teachings. It was an influence that put life into much that would otherwise have been mere dead formalism.

Not so attractive in style, but more comprehensive in scope and exhaustive in treatment, is Volz's *Eschatologie von Daniel bis Akiba*. Volz has chosen the same term as Charles, but uses it in a more inclusive sense. Under it he includes all that Baldensperger means by the title of his work, and much of what Bousset has given in his *Religion des Judenthums*. With Bousset, Volz proposes to place the rabbinical theology alongside of that of the apocalyptic writers, and supplement these two sources by whatever may be found in the Old Testament apocrypha, Philo, Josephus, or any other Jewish writer of the period. All of this material Volz has gone

through with painstaking care, more thoroughly than has been attempted hitherto, with the result that he has given us a work that will, if we mistake not, be the standard reference work on the subjects it treats for a long time to come. After a review of the sources—not, as is the more usual method, in order to decide questions of date and authorship, but to indicate what eschatological material is contained in any given source—he passes to the first of the two main divisions of his study—the *development* of the various eschatological ideas in Judaism in the two centuries from Daniel to Akiba. What we get here is a view of the origin and development of the elemental ideas on the basis of which the eschatological schemes or systems were built. Such conceptions were those of the new age or era, the nation and man in general, the world as an organic force or kingdom, a judgment, salvation, etc. In his second main division Volz deals with the eschatology proper, or, as he calls it, the eschatological *Akte und Zustände*. The order of treatment is so suggestive that we repeat it: The *date* of the end—when? the last evil time or age, culminating in the “day of God;” the messengers or agents of salvation, the ideas culminating in the doctrine of the messianic king; then the great matters of destiny; the reappearance of the departed ones; the judgment with its final doom on the forces of evil and wicked men; the great renewal with the new era of the unopposed reign of God; the eternal salvation, those who will share it, and the nature of their experiences. All this might seem to be taken from the New Testament. It is not, however; it is all purely Jewish; and Volz makes only incidental reference to the New Testament writings. As has been said, these points constitute the elements of the Jewish eschatology. To say that they give us the system, the commonly accepted system of Jewish theology of the last things, would be a mistake. Volz makes this perfectly clear. On many of these points there was no uniform opinion. Apocalyptic writers differed among themselves as well as from the rabbinic authorities. These also were by no means at one.

Barring differences on minor points, it is remarkable that all these specialists—Charles, Baldensperger, Bousset, and Volz—are in substantial agreement as to their main conclusions. Volz’s work will, however, be the one to which we shall turn to get the fullest information or to find the needed reference to the sources. His treatment of the disputed points, such as the significance of the term “Son of man,” is exceptionally fair and helpful.

It remains to say a word on the bearing of these and similar studies on the interpretation of the New Testament. For some time Old Testament students have been conscious that the influence that was once called

verbal inspiration was rather a shaping, formative, selective influence, operating in the life of Israel, often in intimate connection with conceptions and practices and modes of expression which Israel shared with peoples round about her. Is the same view to be extended to the New Testament, even to the teachings of Jesus? These recent studies give clearest proof of at least this fact, that much of the phraseology of the New Testament, even on important subjects, was current coin. Is not the New Testament exegete then compelled to go behind the grammar and lexicon, into the thought of that age, and try to discover what these phrases or statements meant as they passed from mouth to mouth or from book to book in those days? And then the difficult task of ascertaining what they meant on the lips of Jesus or in the writings of Paul! Can a phrase that was coined in the discussions of the schools, or in the fervid utterance of an apocalyptic writer, and, thence passing into popular use, at last found itself used by Jesus, bear the same interpretation as if it had been newly coined by him? This, at least, may be said: If the quantity of the supposed revealed truth in the New Testament writings be diminished by such investigations, the quality of what is left will only be the purer. Or may we not take a broader view, and see in all this restless thought of the apocalyptic writers the workings of the Spirit of God preparing the way for the teachings of the gospel of Christ? Answer such queries as we may, we are face to face with a new set of facts which must profoundly affect all future interpretation of the New Testament.

EDWARD E. NOURSE.

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### NEW WORKS ON THE BOOK OF NUMBERS.

It is surely a singular event that three commentaries<sup>1</sup> on the book of Numbers should have appeared within one twelvemonth or less. This portion of the Old Testament has waited long among the English-speaking

<sup>1</sup> *The International Critical Commentary: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Numbers.* By GEORGE BUCHANAN GRAY. New York: Scribner. lii+489 pages. \$3, net.

*Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament.* Herausgegeben von KARL MARTI. Lieferung 19: *Numeri*. Erklärt von H. HÖLZINGER. Tübingen und Leipzig: Mohr (Siebeck), 1903. M. 3.75.

*Handkommentar zum Alten Testament.* Herausgegeben von W. NOWACK. I. Abteilung: *Die historischen Bücher.* 2. Band, 2. Teil: *Numeri*, übersetzt und erklärt, und *Einleitung zu Exodus-Leviticus-Numeri.* Von BRUNO BAENTSCH. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903. M. 5.80.